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THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 70/NO. 43 NOVEMBER 13, 2006

INSIDE

Nicaragua's legislature votes 52-0 to ban all abortions

—PAGE 3

SWP candidates across United States say:

Vote Socialist Workers Nov. 7!

Unionize all workers! Legalize immigrants now! U.S. troops out of Afghanistan, Iraq, and Korea!

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

October 31—A week before the mid-term elections, Socialist Workers candidates are joining working-class struggles across the United States and taking the party's platform to thousands.

"Solidarity with the Goodyear strikers! Read *Militant*," said signs Diana Newberry, Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor of Iowa, and SWP campaign supporters held at the gate of the Firestone plant in Des Moines, Iowa, today, reported Frank Forrestal, socialist candidate for secretary of agriculture in Iowa.



Militant/Edwin Fruit The Stretch/Joe Wyatt

Left: Diana Newberry, SWP candidate for governor of Iowa, campaigns October 31 at entrance to Firestone plant in Des Moines. Right: Striking Goodyear workers rally October 27 in Tyler, Texas.

Socialist candidates: Support Goodyear strikers!

"The Goodyear workers are standing up to the bosses who are trying to cut wages, do away with retirees' health care, and slash thousands of jobs," Newberry told workers driving in who stopped when they saw the signs. "They deserve everyone's support. The strikers are up

Continued on page 9

Goodyear recruits scabs; strikers call solidarity rallies

BY PAUL MAILHOT

GADSDEN, Alabama, October 29—Hundreds of strikers, their families, and supporters gathered in front of the Goodyear plant here today for a solidarity picnic. The *Gadsden Times* reported more than 1,200 people were on hand for the event, which was sponsored by the United Steelworkers (USW) Local 12L.

Some 15,000 workers employed by Goodyear—the largest tire manufacturer in the United States—have been on strike since October 5 at 12 U.S and 4 Canadian plants. The workers walked out to oppose wage cuts of up to 40 percent, elimination of retiree medical benefits, and company plans to close factories in Alabama and Texas, including the one here.

Many strikers here were pleased with

Continued on page 4

Chinese-Cuban generals: 'Main measure against discrimination was revolution'

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL AND DAVID ARGÜELLO

HAVANA— Speaking to more than 100 students at a junior high school in Old Havana, Gen. Moisés Sío Wong recounted how five decades ago, while attending that very school, he had become involved in the revolutionary struggle to overthrow the Batista dictatorship. He and other students organized protests led by the July 26 Movement, and afterward he joined the Rebel Army in the Sierra Maestra mountains.

Following the January 1959 revolutionary victory, Sío Wong told the audience, he approached Rebel Army commander Ernesto Che Guevara. "I said, 'OK, Che,

Continued on page 6

Mexico: 4,000 police attack protesters in Oaxaca, kill 3

BY NAOMI CRAINE

LOS ANGELES, October 31—More than 4,000 federal riot police stormed the Mexican city of Oaxaca October 29 to remove striking teachers and other protesters from the central square. Armed with light tanks, submachine guns, grenade launchers, and helicopters, the federal cops used tear gas and water cannons to disperse the demonstrators. At least three people were killed and dozens jailed, according to Flavio Sosa, coordinator of the Popular Assembly of the People of Oaxaca (APPO), a coalition of political, student, indigenous, and other organizations.

Some 70,000 teachers throughout the southern Mexican state of Oaxaca have been on strike since May 22, demanding better pay and working conditions. The fight expanded in June after police assaulted the teachers' encampment in the state capital. Now the central demand

Continued on page 8

Clinics staffed by Cuban doctors popular throughout Venezuela

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS AND RÓGER CALERO

VALENCIA, Venezuela—"*Barrio Adentro* is the best thing that happened to this country," said Wilson Salazar, a construction worker here. He was referring to Into the Barrio, a government-sponsored program that has brought some 20,000 volunteer Cuban doctors to this country offering quality health care free of charge to working-class districts and rural areas where people have had no access to medical services.

When he spoke to the *Militant* here October 6, Salazar was part of a crew putting the finishing touches in the Bergoña Integrated Diagnostic Center, a clinic in the Maguanagua section of Valencia, the country's third most populous city and one of its top industrial centers. La Bergoña, financed by the government like all the neighborhood clinics largely staffed by Cuban doctors, is scheduled to be completed before the end of the year, said Uvaldo Rivera, the construction crew foreman.

"We are well into the second phase of Barrio Adentro," said Nelly Gaerste, a Venezuelan doctor who is part of the program. A small but slowly growing number of Venezuelan doctors, about 2,000 nationwide, according to Gaerste, work alongside Cubans in these neighborhood clinics.

The program was launched in the Lib-

Continued on page 8

Washington, Beijing tighten squeeze on Korean people

BY OLYMPIA NEWTON

November 1—Washington and Beijing are tightening the economic squeeze on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), following the imposition of U.S.-crafted sanctions on north Korea by the United Nations Security Council two weeks ago.

Meanwhile, the government of the DPRK agreed yesterday to return to six-party talks on its nuclear program, according to China's Foreign Ministry. The talks, which include the governments of China, Japan, Russia, south Korea, and the United States, have been stalled

Continued on page 2

Miners fight black lung

43rd miner killed on job

BY BILL ESTRADA

BECKLEY, West Virginia, October 28—About 50 representatives of the National Black Lung Association (BLA) met here today. The organization, founded in 1968, has fought the coal bosses and the government for decades to improve conditions for coal miners, thousands of whom suffer from black lung disease

Continued on page 4

All out to max 'Militant' subs

Dear Reader,

Supporters of the *Militant* sold 305 subscriptions to the paper last week, surpassing the previous record. With this momentum, selling the 566 subs left to make the goal of 2,600 in the last week of the circulation drive is reachable.

Doing so will help spread solidarity with the Goodyear strike and other struggles reported in this issue. It will clarify for more people what's the working-class alternative to the dog-eat-dog capitalist system and its parties, the Democrats

Continued on page 4

Also Inside:

Australia: coroner says cop killed Aborigine in jail 2

Striking knitwear workers in Scotland win a round 3

Movie highlights struggles by Asians in the Americas 5

How Cuba's working people defeated U.S. gov't threat of nuclear war in October 1962 7

Australia: coroner's report says cop killed Aborigine in custody



Ted Riethmuller

Two hundred people march in Queensland October 10 to demand the cop responsible for killing an Aborigine be fired.

BY MANUELE LASALO AND LINDA HARRIS

SYDNEY, Australia—A coroner's report released September 27 found that Christopher Hurley, a Queensland police officer, was responsible for the death of Mulrunji Cameron Doomadgee, an Aborigine from Palm Island, off the northeast coast of Australia.

Mulrunji, 36, died Nov. 19, 2004, in a police cell shortly after being arrested for drunkenness. He died as a result of a ruptured liver and portal vein and had suffered four broken ribs. Almost two years later Queensland coroner Christine Clements ruled that Mulrunji was fatally injured by a series of blows from Hurley. In her report she described the video images of Mulrunji writhing in pain as he lay dying on the cell floor. She found that there had been no attempt to check his condition.

Her report directly contradicted the findings of an interim autopsy in 2004 that exonerated the cops, claiming that Mulrunji fell accidentally, and that there was no evidence his injuries had resulted from a direct use of force.

This report led to angry protests by Aborigines on Palm Island two years ago. The police station, barracks, and courthouse were burnt down at the time. In response, some 200 riot cops were flown in. Heavily armed police swept the island and arrested 19 Aborigines.

Palm Island has a population of about 4,000, mainly Aborigines. The island was used for much of the last century as an internment camp for indigenous people forcibly removed from traditional lands across northern Australia.

Seven of the Palm Islanders accused of rioting are still awaiting trial. Lex Wotton, who police allege was "the ring leader of the riot," was charged with assault and arson. Stewart Levitt, Wotton's lawyer, has cited Clements's findings as a reason for dropping all riot charges. Clements also ruled that Mulrunji's behaviour did not warrant his arrest by Hurley.

Police Commissioner Robert Atkinson refused to suspend Hurley but after angry reaction from Palm Island elders and Aboriginal activists, moved him to non-operational duties. Hurley issued a statement October 7 in which he "reluctantly" offered to stand down—on full pay. Queensland Premier Peter Beattie announced September 27 that the coroner's report has been referred to the director of public prosecutions for an "independent" assessment. He said the move was "a matter of due process," and "should not be seen as a reflection of the guilt or innocence of any person mentioned in the report."

But the mayor of Palm Island, Erykah Kyle, said the community wanted further justice. "[There's] a long way yet," she said.

Some 200 people, mainly Aborigines, marched October 10 to the opening of the Queensland state parliament to demand justice for Mulrunji. Protesters called for Hurley to be sacked and immediately charged with the murder of Mulrunji.

In response to the protest Beattie stated that the "process [of law must] be followed."

Mulrunji's family plans to file a civil lawsuit against Hurley and the Queensland police. Murrandoo Yanner, a spokesman for the family, said that the family did not have high expectations of the justice system and were not relying on criminal charges to be laid.

Their attitude is well founded. No police officer has ever been charged over an Aborigine's death in custody in Australia.

Washington, Beijing pressure north Korea into talks

Continued from front page

since November 2005, when Washington imposed new financial sanctions against north Korea.

Moscow, Beijing, and Seoul have joined the U.S.-led campaign of economic and diplomatic pressure on the DPRK since Pyongyang conducted a nuclear arms test October 8.

"I'm pleased and I want to thank the Chinese for encouraging the meeting that got the agreement to get the six-party talks restarted," said U.S. president George Bush. He said the talks would aim to get north Korea to abandon its nuclear program "in a verifiable fashion."

China, which supplies 90 percent of north Korea's oil, exported no crude oil to the DPRK in September. Beijing held back 12,000 barrels of oil a day from Pyongyang even while it imported more coal and electricity from the DPRK.

However, despite earlier inspections of north Korean cargo by Chinese border guards as mandated by the UN Security Council, press reports from the China–north Korea border suggest that the inspections have died down.

"There are just as many trucks as before the sanctions," Mr. Li, a Chinese businessman in the border town of Dadong, told the *Globe and Mail* October 30.

The DPRK's decision to return to the six-party talks came five days after the government of south Korea announced it was banning the entry of north Korean officials who are supposedly part of the north's nuclear program.

The travel ban is the first concrete measure Seoul has taken to comply with the U.S.-engineered resolution, approved by the UN Security Council October 14, which instituted harsh sanctions on the DPRK.

An October 27 statement from the DPRK's National Reconciliation Council said Washington's pressures were designed to "incite confrontation between fellow countrymen and push the situation on the Korean peninsula to the phase of war." Washington has 30,000 troops in south Korea to maintain the division of that country.

On October 27, some 8,000 south Korean army, navy, and air force troops staged the largest amphibious landing exercise in their history.

"It's regular training," Marine captain Han No Soo told the Associated Press. "But yes, North Korea is in the back of our minds. Some of us may be thinking of this as a North Korean beach."

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Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the Militant's views. These are expressed in editorials.

Nicaragua's legislature votes 52-0 to ban all abortions

BY RÓGER CALERO

On October 26 Nicaragua's legislature passed a bill banning all abortions.

The measure was approved in a 52-0 vote, with 9 abstentions and 29 deputies not showing up. Representatives of both of the major parties in the National Assembly, the Liberal Alliance and the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) backed the bill.

Lawmakers put off a decision on sections of the bill that includes stiff jail sentences for women undergoing abortions and anyone who helps them. A section of the legislation that would institute jail terms of up to 30 years was not passed. Currently, women who receive the medical procedure and anyone who aids them can be sentenced to up to six years in jail.

Opponents of a woman's right to choose abortion, including leaders of the Catholic church, pushed for the bill shortly before the November 5 presidential elections.

According to Reuters, "Hundreds of people protested outside the National Assembly in the capital" against the abortion ban the day before it passed. The news service quoted protester Xiomara Luna saying, "They are forcing women and girls to die. They are not pro-life, they are pro-death."

Earlier in October, thousands participated in an anti-abortion rally in Managua organized by church and other groups.

Previously, abortion was legal if three doctors agreed that the pregnant woman's life would be in danger, or if the pregnancy resulted from rape or incest, and only if the woman had the consent of her spouse or other relatives.

Three of the four main presidential candidates, including Daniel Ortega, the FSLN candidate, supported the bill. According to the *Los Angeles Times,* "In September [Ortega] signed a declaration drafted by evangelical leaders that declared the existing abortion laws in Nicaragua are a 'pretext to legalize all abortions.'"

The position of the FSLN leadership on abortion is consistent with its stance on the question in the mid-1980s when a public debate broke out in Nicaragua on whether to repeal a law dating back to the Somoza dictatorship barring almost all abortions. That law was left intact by the FSLN-led government, which had come to power in 1979 through a popular insurrection that toppled the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Anastasio Somoza. The FSLN government adopted it despite the fact that thousands of women were dying every year or suffering serious injuries from back-alley or self-induced abortions.

At a Sept. 26, 1987, meeting held to coincide with the 10th anniversary of the founding of the Sandinista-led national women's organization, the Nicaraguan Women's Association-Luisa Amanda Espinoza (AMNLAE), covered by *Militant* reporters in Nicaragua at the time, Ortega outlined this view.

Pointing to Nicaragua's small population relative to its territory, and the "policy of genocide" that the country was being subjected to through the U.S.-sponsored contra war, Ortega said, "The ones fighting in the front lines against this aggression are young men…. One way of depleting our youth is to promote the sterilization of women in Nicaragua—just imagine what would happen then—or to promote a policy of abortion."

Ortega continued, "The problem is that the woman is the one who reproduces. The man can't play that role." Some women, he said, "aspiring to be liberated," decide not to bear children. "A woman who does so, negates her own continuity, the continuity of the human species," he said.

The *Militant* reported at the time that Ortega's remarks were met with a noticeable murmur and that a number of women went up to him at the end to express their disagreement.

A resolution adopted by the August 1990 Socialist Workers Party national convention titled, "Defend Revolutionary Nicaragua: The Eroding Foundations of the Workers and Farmers Government," published in issue no. 9 of the Marxist magazine *New International*, pointed out that in early 1989 the AMNLAE leadership announced plans to introduce legislation into the National Assembly to legalize abortion, outlaw wife beating, and stiffen legal penalties against rape. By the middle of the year, however, it stated, "AMNLAE leaders had bowed to pressures by the FSLN leadership, which openly argued that raising issues such as abortion rights, wife beating or rape would—in the words of AMNLAE co-coordinator Mónica Baltodano—'only create confusion' and hurt the FSLN's candidates in an 'electoral period.' "

A brief declaration issued by the FSLN delegation to the Nicaraguan National Assembly Aug. 16, 2006, echoed this position.

"We are a party in favor of life," it said. "Therefore we reaffirm our respect, promotion, development, and protection of the lives of Nicaraguan men and women… and consequently we stand against abortion."

According to Ipas, a U.S.-based reproductive rights groups, only 24 authorized abortions have been performed in Nicaragua in the last three years, while some 32,000 illegal abortions are performed in the country each year. Maternal and infant mortality rates in Nicaragua are among the highest in the region, with abortions contributing to 16 percent of all maternal deaths.

Throughout Latin America, abortion is legal only in Cuba and Puerto Rico.

1,000 march in Paris suburb on anniversary of protests by youth of African descent



AP Photo/Christian Hartmann

Some 1,000 people took part in a memorial march in Clichy-sous-Bois, a northeastern Paris suburb, October 27. The march was a tribute for two African youths, Traore Bouna, 15, and Zyad Benna, 17, who were electrocuted in a power substation after being chased by police at a checkpoint one year ago. Eleven cops have now been summoned to testify in an ongoing investigation. An angry revolt erupted last year across 300 French cities after the cops were cleared of any wrongdoing in the deaths of the youths. French authorities have deployed 4,000 extra police in response to the most recent protests in several cities. The banner reads "dead for nothing."

— SAM MANUEL

Knitwear strikers in Scotland win court ruling

BY PETER CLIFFORD AND XERARDO ARIAS

COATBRIDGE, Scotland, October 30—"It's a victory for us, had we not been able to picket the front gate our strike would have been more difficult," said strike committee member and sewing machinist Jo McLean today, the ninth day of picketing by knitwear workers at Mackinnon Mill here. The 110 members of the Community trade union began protests September 28 and have held weekly two-day strikes for a 2.5 percent wage increase.

McLean expressed the sentiments of many workers as they returned to the picket line at the company's front entrance after Judge Brian Napier ruled October 27 against the Edinburgh Woollen Mill bosses, who claimed the workers weren't picketing a worksite entrance. Strike committee member Alison McCaughie said that when she called to inform the shift working that day of the ruling, workers cheered for the victory.

The bosses took court action claiming that the picketing was illegal and a threat to safety because it took place in front of a company retail store and not the entrance to the plant. Days earlier the bosses had instructed workers not to use that entrance to come into or go out of the plant. The judge ruled, however, that the gate was the accepted main entrance to the factory at the time the industrial action commenced and that it was clear the company's main purpose was to undermine legal industrial action.

After the judge's ruling the company put up signs at the main gate stating parking is for customers only and that all deliveries must made at the side entrance.

As a result of the workers' actions retail sales have slumped by up to 25 percent, according to McCaughie. Support for the picketers remains solid. Whistles are blown in response to hoots from passing cars and trucks and loud cheers are heard when retail store customers turn back on hearing about the strike action.

In an attempt to weaken this kind of solidarity, the bosses have published ads locally and are distributing flyers to customers at the retail store claiming that the store and the mill are two different companies, even though they have the same owner.

"We're all determined now not to back down," said McCaughie. To take on company threats, strikers here have reorganized picketing to boost their presence in the daytime. The company has refused to talk with the union about a pay increase. Some workers' basic pay starts at £3.29 an hour, requiring extra hard work on piece rate to make the £5.35 minimum wage (£1= US$1.90).

At the same time the company is pressing disciplinary action against four workers, accusing them of threatening the six nonunion strikebreakers. McCaughie said strikers are not intimidated and plan selective strike action through mid-December. They will also join a November 11 demonstration by Community trade union members fighting jobs cuts at a plant in Sterling.

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

FLORIDA

Miami

How Korea's Working People Defeated U.S. Forces in 1950s War. Speakers: Bernie Senter, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Congress; Holly Anagnos, abortion rights activist. Fri., Nov. 10. Dinner, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. *8365 NE 2nd Ave., Rm. 206. Tel.: (305) 756-4436.*

NEW YORK

Manhattan

What the Election Results Mean for Working People. Speakers: A panel of Socialist Workers candidates. Fri., Nov. 10. Dinner, 7 p.m.; program, 8 p.m. *307 W. 36th St., 10th Fl. (use north elevators). Tel.: (212) 629-6649.*

TEXAS

Houston

Thomas Sankara: We Are the Heirs of the World Revolution. Speaker: Jacquie Henderson, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Nov. 10, 7:30 p.m. *4800 W. 34th St., Suite C-51A. Tel. (713) 869-6550.*

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland

The Tamil Struggle in Sri Lanka. Speaker: Patrick Brown, Communist League. Fri., Nov. 10, 7 p.m. Donation: $3. *7 Mason Ave., Otahuhu (upstairs, above laundromat). Tel.: (09) 276-8885.*

CALENDAR

Our History Is Still Being Written

The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution

Panel discussion and reception

Wed., November 8, 7:00 p.m.
Refreshments served at 6:30 p.m.

UCLA Department of Information Studies. GSE&IS Bldg., Room 111
(On the corner of Royce Dr. and Charles E. Young Dr. North)

Panelists: **Mary-Alice Waters**, president of Pathfinder Press and editor of *Our History Is Still Being Written*; **Clara M. Chu**, Associate Professor, Department of Information Studies and Department of Asian American Studies, UCLA; and **Nobuko Miyamoto**, Founder and Artistic Director, Great Leap
Facilitator: **Russell Leong**, editor, *Amerasia Journal*

Sponsors: Asians in the Americas Working Group, Amerasia Journal*, Dept. of Asian American Studies, So. Cal. Library for Social Studies and Research, and UCLA Asian American Studies Center*

Goodyear strikers hold solidarity rallies

Continued from front page

the turnout, especially after news of company moves to break the strike. Goodyear has engaged Modern Industrial Services (MIS), an anti-labor outfit that advertises, "We will keep your unruly union strikers under control," to begin assembling a strikebreaking force of "temporary workers." An *Opelika-Auburn News* advertisement by MIS offers a "sign on bonus" and "top pay" for immediate openings at a "tire plant in Gadsden."

The tire giant has also started a public relations campaign to win support for using scabs. "Goodyear is selectively adding temporary workers in affected plants to continue serving customers," says Ed Markey, a Goodyear spokesman. "Among the critical products are items needed by the American military in its war on terror around the globe."

Asked about the company's appeals to patriotism to get strikers back to work, Bren Riley, vice president of USW Local 12L, told the *Militant*, "No, we're not going to fall for that." Riley said the company can settle the strike if it wants to keep producing tires.

"We've never had a worker cross the line in a strike here," Riley said. Union members will maintain a strong picket to "discourage anyone from crossing."

"Solidarity is the key now," Riley said. "Local 12 has had a long history of aiding other strikes, support that will come back to us tenfold. B.F. Goodrich workers in Tuscaloosa and Opelika are already giving us support, and the local nonunion grocery store has donated more food than anyone to our picket line."

There are 1,250 USW members at Goodyear in Gadsden. The picket line is up 24/7, with about 20 workers always in front of the plant.

❖

BY ANTHONY DUTROW

HOUSTON—Some 500 workers and family held an outdoor rally October 29 at the USW Local 746L union hall, across the street from the struck Goodyear plant in Tyler, Texas, strikers said.

"The rally was so big that cars were parked all along the highway. That's the kind of solidarity we've kept up since the beginning," Robert Lemons, a picket captain who has worked in shipping for 16 years, said in a phone interview.

"Not one worker has crossed the picket line. One worker on my picket did call me today to say he had to start another job, but we'll be able to cover for him," Lemons said. "We're now getting in financial contributions from unions around the area. Our round-the-clock pickets continue getting reinforcements from other unionists, family, and friends."

"We were told that Goodyear is organizing a force of up to 300, what they are calling 'contingency workers,'" said Ricky Shields, a millright, who also took part in the rally. "That's not what I call them. They're scabs. The bosses claimed they could run the plant with supervisors and temporaries. It proves we're right in saying they couldn't do it. This is going to be a longer battle for sure."

On October 18, Reuters reported that Goodyear's stocks had been downgraded due to a $1 billion loan the company took to finance its strikebreaking operations.

About 1,000 USW members are employed at the Tyler plant. The day after the October 29 rally the company announced to the press plans to close the plant.



Militant/Tamar Rosenfeld

Solidarity picnic at Goodyear plant in Gadsden, Alabama, October 29.

Miners fight black lung; 43rd coal miner dies

Continued from front page

caused by breathing excessive levels of coal and rock dust.

Two days after the conference concluded, another miner was killed in West Virginia. With two months to go, 2006 is already the deadliest year in U.S. coal mines since 1995, with 43 fatalities.

John Stewart, the outgoing president of the BLA, opened its annual meeting by asking: "Why is black lung on the rise?" Stewart said the reason is lack of enforcement of existing laws by the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) and more nonunion mines opening up.

"Conditions have worsened with more coal dust and less air. This is what miners are reporting to us," said Debbie Johnson from the Bluestone Clinic in Princeton, West Virginia. "We see the results in the X-rays. Younger miners with less time having positive X-rays and a few having complicated cases of black lung."

The disease, also known as pneumoconiosis, is a preventable illness. Water spraying and proper ventilation can greatly diminish the levels of respirable dust.

A study conducted between 1996 and 2002 by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) revealed increasing black lung cases in younger miners. The NIOSH report said that "severe and rapidly progressive cases of the disease continue to occur among young miners. Cases of rapidly progressive coal workers' pneumoconiosis appear to be clustered in eastern Kentucky and western Virginia."

A follow-up NIOSH survey of 328 underground coal miners in March and May of this year in Lee and Wise counties in Virginia confirmed this trend. Nine percent or 30 of these miners had X-ray evidence of black lung, and 11 of the 30 were advanced cases. According to NIOSH, "advanced cases are likely to result in respiratory disability and premature death." The study says the current dust limit may be too high and that there could be an underestimation of the actual dust exposures. Coal companies have been responsible for coal-dust sampling and miners often point out that the bosses don't enforce existing standards.

Silica (rock dust) can also contribute to getting advanced black lung. "A young miner with black lung reported mining through rolls and rolls of rock," said Sparkle Bonds of the Virginia BLA.

Many of those at the meeting here also discussed the lengthy and complicated process of obtaining black lung benefits. Stewart said that only between 8 percent and 12 percent of miners with black lung who apply receive benefits. "Miners don't have to be in their death beds to receive black lung benefits," said Stewart.

BLA representatives came from Kentucky, Illinois, Virginia, West Virginia, and Alabama. Others present included black lung clinic workers and representatives from the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA).

Meanwhile, the UMWA organized a protest October 24 of some 70 coal miners and UMWA officials at a meeting of MSHA officials in Morgantown, West Virginia. Following two recent deaths of coal miners in West Virginia and Pennsylvania, the miners came to protest the quality of oxygen units, the self-contained self-rescuers that miners carry on their belts, and to demand more mine inspectors.

The 43rd U.S. miner killed this year died in West Virginia five days after that protest. The miner, whose name was not released, was crushed by a shuttle car, which is used to haul coal from the mining machine to a conveyor belt, as he and a mechanic were attempting to repair it October 30 at Bluestone Coal's Double Bonus No. 65 Mine in Wyoming County, West Virginia. The mechanic was injured in the shoulder and chest. The mine, which is organized by the UMWA, employs 71 people.

Tony Lane, a coal miner in Pennsylvania, contributed to this article.

Fall 'Militant' Subscription Drive
Sept. 9 – Nov. 7 ♦ Week 7 of 8

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CANADA	**130**	**126**	**97%**
AUSTRALIA	**50**	**44**	**88%**
NEW ZEALAND	60	52	87%
UNITED STATES			
Washington, DC	**105**	**93**	**89%**
Newark	**150**	**132**	**88%**
Des Moines	175	150	86%
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Albany, NY	20	16	80%
Chicago	100	77	77%
Birmingham	115	86	75%
Miami	170	123	72%
New York	300	212	71%
Twin Cities	160	110	69%
Atlanta	100	66	66%
Pittsburgh	60	37	62%
Seattle	80	49	61%
Amherst, MA	10	6	60%
Tampa, FL	10	6	60%
Los Angeles	145	86	59%
Detroit	10	5	50%
San Diego, CA	6	3	50%
U.S. Total	2146	1608	75%
ICELAND	18	11	61%
OTHER		2	
Int'l totals	**2596**	**2035**	**78%**
Should be	**2600**	**2275**	**88%**

*** increased quota (** twice)**

'Militant' subscription drive

Continued from front page

and Republicans who serve the wealthy in the United States. It will help get the word out more widely about the example of the Cuban Revolution for the world's working people and its sharp contrast to other self-described "communists," such as the Chinese government.

Here are a couple of notes *Militant* supporters sent in as this issue went to press.

Canada had a great week with nearly 30 subs. "The highlights: we sold 2 subs at each of the meat-packing plants where *Militant* supporters work and 10 from a table at Trent University in Peterborough where there are two members of the Young Socialists," wrote Bev Bernardo from Toronto.

"We just got in from a door-to-door sale where we sold an introductory sub. That brings us to 11. Seven more to go!" wrote Ólöf Andra Proppé from Reykjavik, Iceland, where they sold three more subs over the weekend. That's the spirit. Join the all-out effort to make the goal!

Sincerely,
Argiris Malapanis, Editor

$16,000 to go on Militant Fund

BY PAUL PEDERSON

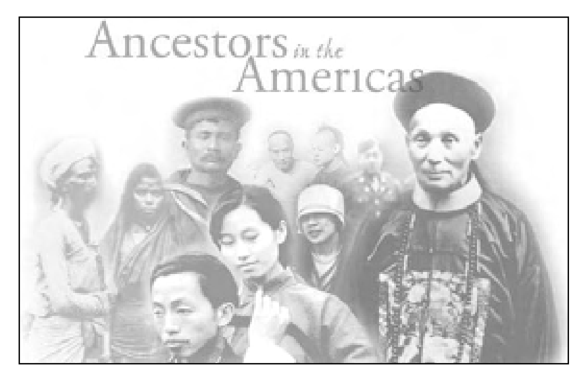
In the second-to-last week of the eight-week *Militant* fund drive over $17,000 was collected. With a similar effort in the final week supporters of the paper can go over the top. Less than $16,000 remains to be collected to reach the $90,000 goal by the November 7. The local quotas, however, add up to a few thousand more. Let's collect every penny! Keep the checks coming! They will be put to good use to continue sending reporters out and to pay the printer and other bills.

Send donations, earmarked Militant Fund, to the *Militant* at 306 W. 37th St. 10th floor, NY, NY 10018, or see a distributor near you (see directory on p. 8).

$90,000 'Militant' Fund Drive
Sept. 9 –Nov. 7 ♦ Week 7 of 8

Country	Quota	Paid	%
ICELAND	**450**	**595**	**132%**
FRANCE	250	212	85%
CANADA	3,500	2,870	82%
UNITED STATES			
Atlanta	**5,500**	**5,470**	**99%**
Birmingham	**3,500**	**3,209**	**92%**
Boston	**3,500**	**3,175**	**91%**
Washington, D.C.	**2,800**	**2,518**	**90%**
New York	**13,000**	**11,678**	**90%**
Miami	2,500	2,132	85%
Des Moines	2,200	1,872	85%
San Francisco	9,000	7,649	85%
Newark	3,500	2,835	81%
Los Angeles	8,200	6,539	80%
Philadelphia	4,000	3,113	78%
Seattle	7,000	5,053	72%
Houston	3,200	2,290	72%
Tampa	300	203	68%
Amherst	60	40	67%
Chicago	5,000	3,093	62%
Twin Cities	4,800	2,710	56%
Pittsburgh	4,200	1,707	41%
Detroit	1,200	125	10%
Albany	120	0	0%
San Diego	50	0	0%
Other		750	
U.S. total	83,630	66,161	79%
AUSTRALIA	1,200	940	78%
NEW ZEALAND	2,500	1,947	78%
UNITED KINGDOM			
London	1,300	1,083	83%
Edinburgh	500	260	52%
UK total	1,800	1,343	75%
SWEDEN	500	150	30%
Intl'l totals	**93,830**	**74,218**	**82%**
Goal/Should be	**90,000**	**78,750**	**88%**

Movie highlights struggles by Asian immigrants in the Americas



BY BETSEY STONE

SAN FRANCISCO—For hundreds of years Asians have been part of the Americas, helping to shape the history of the United States and other countries in the hemisphere.

This history, largely unknown but relevant to the fight for immigrant rights and other working-class struggles today, is brought to life in a two-part documentary, *Ancestors in the Americas*, produced by filmmaker Loni Ding for television.

IN REVIEW

As told in Part I, *Coolies, Sailors and Settlers: Voyage to the New World,* the early Asian immigration to the Americas goes back to the 17th century, when barbers in Mexico are recorded as complaining about competition from the Chinese. Asian sailors, including Filipinos, Malays, Asian Indians, and Chinese, voyaged on trading ships between Asia and the Americas. Some jumped ship, creating communities of Chinese in Mexico, and settlements of Filipinos in Louisiana.

The first big wave of Asian immigration took place in the second half of the 19th century when London, Paris, and other colonial powers were consolidating their empires.

As the film describes, the colonizers were never able to take direct control of China. But in the early 1840s, as a result of China's defeat in the Opium War, they were able to force China to give up Hong Kong and make other concessions.

The film takes you to the site where the war began, the museum in Canton built at the place where the Chinese in 1841 destroyed huge piles of opium that was being introduced into China by British traders. Using as an excuse the refusal of the Chinese to accept the opium, the British military attacked, forcing the Chinese to turn over sections of their port cities for use by the colonizers.

From the early 1800s on, steps were being taken to end the African slave trade. As a substitute, British, Spanish, American, and other colonial powers organized the infamous "coolie trade"—a harsh system of indentured servitude that brought Asians to work on their plantations and enterprises in the Americas.

Hundreds of thousands of Asian Indians and Chinese were "recruited," often kidnapped and taken to work in Cuba, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, Guyana, and other colonies. In this hugely profitable business, the ships used were modeled on African slave ships, with many perishing on the four- to five-month journeys. The workers mutinied on 1 out of every 11 voyages, with some of the mutinies succeeding.

Details of the inhuman conditions faced by the Chinese in Cuba are recorded in the testimony of these workers given to a commission sent from China in 1874 to investigate. This testimony is quoted in the film, describing workdays of 21 hours, inadequate food, beatings, and widespread refusals by the Spanish plantation owners to free the workers when their labor contracts ran out.

"They spoke out at great risk, leaving their history for generations to come," a narrator says, adding that many of these Chinese joined in the Cuban struggle for independence from Spain.

Part II, *Chinese in the Frontier West: An American Story*, begins with the first big wave of Chinese coming to the United States during the 1849 gold rush. Slavery still existed then and Native Americans and Mexicans were being dispossessed of their lands and excluded from citizenship rights. The film details how the racist laws and practices used against Blacks, Mexicans, and Native Americans were also directed against Chinese, who were not allowed to become citizens or to testify in court.

Chinese workers played a central role in the last half of the 19th century in the economic development of the West. They were a third of the miners, built the transcontinental railroad, constructed the levees and irrigation channels that allowed agriculture to flourish in the Sacramento–San Joaquin delta and, in the 1880s, became a majority of agricultural workers in California.

They were also subjected to exorbitant special taxes and made into scapegoats, blamed for unemployment and the bad job conditions most workers faced.

During the economic depression of the 1870s, violent attacks against the Chinese escalated. In 1882 U.S. Congress passed the infamous Chinese Exclusion Act, reducing Chinese immigration to a trickle. The law was repealed in 1943.

Ancestors in the Americas highlights the history of resistance by the Chinese to these racist attacks—the many legal cases for justice, a strike of railroad workers for equal pay, the uprising by the people of Canton who beat the coolie trade "recruiters," and the mutinies on the ships.

"Our story is told crossing centuries of time and many oceans," the film's narrator says at the beginning. "I am on this voyage with you seeking America's past and her present."

The film encompasses sweeps of history not taught in schools—a history that needs to be told to help advance today's struggle for immigrants' rights.

Both parts of *Ancestors in the Americas* are available from the Center for Educational Telecommunications (CET). Ordering information can be found on its website: *www.cetel.org* or by writing to *loniding@sonic.net*.

—ON THE PICKET LINE—

Miami Wal-Mart workers walk out over schedules

MIAMI—A walkout and protest by up to 200 Wal-Mart workers October 16 pushed back management's attempt to reduce their hours at the Supercenter in Hialeah Gardens, Florida. After walking out the workers called a local radio station.

Guillermo Vasquez, a 24-year-old furniture department worker and one of the protest organizers, said the bosses announced that workers would have to be available for work 24 hours a day and that schedules were no longer guaranteed, even for those who have worked at Wal-Mart for years. Workers' schedules were reduced from 40 hours a week to, in some cases, 8, 6, or no hours. The company also instituted a new policy on sick leave, forcing workers to call a phone number to get a code to excuse an absence. Workers can be fired if they exceed a certain number of absences in a six-month period. Attacks on the workers by management at Wal-Mart Stores, the largest U.S. retailer, has included wage caps and use of more part-time workers. Following the walk-out, company officials told workers they would get back their weekly 40-hour schedule for now. Many workers say they have also been told that management will attempt to vary the schedules from week to week beginning next year.

—Deborah Liatos

New Zealand meat workers win fight for contract

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand—Dressed in white overalls with cow masks, cowbells, and wooden clackers for hooves, 11 members of the New Zealand Meat Workers union from the Southmore meat processing plant and their supporters picketed Countdown supermarket headquarters in Sydenham October 16. Joining them were several workers from the Progressive warehouse distribution centers, who had recently won their fight for higher pay. The Council of Trade Unions called the protest to support the Southmore workers' fight to close the average hourly gap of NZ $6.00 (about US$4) between their pay and that of other meat workers. The Southmore plant is owned by Progressive Enterprises. It processes beef, lamb, pork, and chicken.

Four days after the picket, Southmore workers approved a contract with a 3.5 percent raise with back pay. While this falls short of the 12 percent workers had been fighting for, union member Liz Blakely told the *Militant*, "The win for us is we got the back pay and a one-year contract that lines us up with the Foodmore workers." Foodmore, a meat processing plant in Auckland organized by the National Distribution Union, is also owned by Progressive.

The settlement follows three walk-outs, including a weeklong strike in July and two 48-hour strikes in September. During the September strikes, Southmore workers joined picket lines with warehouse distribution center workers who were locked out by Progressive Enterprises for four weeks.

— Ruth Gray

—25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO—

25 CENTS
THE MILITANT
A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY/PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

November 13, 1981

Like the rest of the labor movement, the United Mine Workers (UMW) is under attack from the bosses and the government. This attack did not just begin.

When the operators tried to force union-breaking contracts down the miners' throats in 1977 and earlier this year, they ran up against 160,000 coal miners who will not work without a contract and who will not vote for a contract if they think they can get a better one….

The miners are now subjected to the dismantling of safety protection and black lung benefits by the Reagan administration and congress. The coal companies are on a new drive to open nonunion mines right in the strongest union areas.

When the black lung cuts were first announced, the union organized a two-day mine shutdown and 8,000 miners marched on Washington last March.

THE MILITANT
PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE
NEW YORK, N.Y. FIVE (5) CENTS

November 12, 1956

Nov. 7—"Eisenhower's landslide victory is conclusive proof that the heads of the union movement in America have led labor into a political blind alley," today declared Farrell Dobbs, Socialist Workers Party candidate for President. "All the toil and treasure that the union movement poured into the Democratic Party campaign, at the behest of the labor bureaucrats, is now shown to have been wasted," said Dobbs. "Not only did the labor vote fail to defeat Eisenhower and the Cadillac cabinet, but where it did succeed—in the Congressional elections—the net result is to put control of Congress into the hands of dyed-in-the-wool labor haters and white supremacists—the Southern Bourbons.

"Had the same amount of energy and money been put into the building and running of a Labor Party in this election," Dobbs pointed out "even in defeat there would be something to show for it. Union men and women would have the basic structure of a party belonging to them."



November 14, 1931

The long-expected wave of wage-cuts broke in the first week of October, initiated by the Steel Corporation and quickly followed by Bethlehem the Aluminum Co., Allied Chemical, etc. Capitalism serves notice on the worker that it can no longer maintain the "American standard of living." In previous crises, too, wages have been cut, but they have sooner or later recovered, as American capitalism has increased its productivity to new high levels. Unless American capitalism can turn the trick again, this time wages will not come back.

American capitalism needs low wages, first to meet the aggravated competition of England and Germany, second, to enable it to create new fixed capital at low costs based on low wages plus low raw material cost…

The maintenance of wages, "agreed to" by the railroads at Mr. Hoover's 1929 conferences, is a pleasant illusion shipwrecked on the rocks of reality.

Chinese-Cuban generals

Continued from front page

the war's over. I want to go back to school and become an electrical engineer.' Che replied, 'You're leaving *now*? Don't be a jerk. Now is when the revolution begins!'"

Sío Wong said this episode, which had a deep impact on him, is told in *Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution*. All three authors—Gens. Armando Choy, Gustavo Chui, and Sío Wong—spoke at the October 24 meeting, along with Iraida Aguirrechu, a senior editor at Editora Política, the publishing house of the Cuban Communist Party's Central Committee, and Mary-Alice Waters, editor of the book and president of Pathfinder Press.

In *Our History Is Still Being Written* Choy, Chui, and Sío Wong tell how, as young rebels of Chinese-Cuban descent, they joined the revolutionary war that toppled the U.S.-backed dictatorship and opened the road to the first socialist revolution in the Americas. In a lifetime of revolutionary activity, they each became a general in Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces, and continue today to shoulder major leadership responsibilities.

Choy organizes the cross-ministry working group responsible for transforming the infrastructure of the port of Havana and restoring the environmental health of the bay. Sío Wong, who remains on active duty in the Revolutionary Armed Forces, is president of the National Institute of State Reserves. Chui is part of the national leadership of the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution.

The Havana meeting was one of seven book presentations that also took place in three eastern cities—Holguín, Bayamo, and Santiago de Cuba—as well as in Ciego de Avila, Quemado de Güines, and Corralillo in the central region. In each place the events were hosted by the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution (ACRC) along with the municipal government and the Cuban Communist Party (CCP) in the province.

The initiative for the trip to the eastern part of the country came from the ACRC, which in February had organized seven presentations in Havana and cities in central Cuba following the Havana International Book Fair, where the title was launched.

More than 1,000 people attended the meetings. They included members of the Combatants Association, Chinese-Cuban residents, high school students, and members of mass organizations such as the Federation of Cuban Women and Committees for the Defense of the Revolution. Among them were the presidents and vice presidents of city and provincial governments and Cuban Communist Party leaders including the party first secretaries in four provinces.

The cross-country tour also included visits in each city to museums and other sites highlighting Cuba's revolutionary history. The hosts also took their visitors to see recent accomplishments, such as an attractive new housing development in Bayamo and a newly rebuilt and expanded municipal clinic in Corralillo now offering 18 diagnostic and other services, for which residents previously had to travel to other nearby cities.

Cuba's Chinese heritage was a feature of the tour, from a dinner at the Chinese association's hall in Ciego de Ávila to a martial arts demonstration by junior high school students in Havana.

The Havana meeting was held at the José Martí Experimental Secondary School, a special school organized as part of the educational revolution under way in Cuba. The teachers, most in their late teens or early 20s, attend an accelerated teacher training program. Classes have no more than 15 pupils per teacher, and are organized to allow teachers to give more personalized attention to the students, ages 12–15, many of whom are from some of poorest and most overcrowded predominantly working-class areas in the city.

At the meeting Aguirrechu, who introduced each of the speakers, noted that *Our History Is Still Being Written* is one of more than 60 titles by Pathfinder on the Cuban Revolution. Editora Política, she reported, is now preparing a Cuban edition of the new book.

Aguirrechu introduced Waters as the book's editor, president of Pathfinder, and a member of the Political Committee of the Socialist Workers Party. She also introduced other members of the group reporting for the *Militant*: Martín Koppel, a member of the party's National Committee and one of the book's interviewers; David Argüello, a Young Socialist and Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Congress in San Diego; and Michel Dugré, a garment worker, member of the Communist League in Canada, and its candidate for Toronto city council.

Through *Our History Is Still Being Written*, Waters said, working people are introduced to the Cuban Revolution as "a practical example of how to fight, how to win, and even more importantly, how to organize to defend what we have won."





Militant photos by Martín Koppel

Top: Panel presenting *Our History Is Still Being Written* at José Martí Experimental High School in Old Havana, October 24. From right: Gen. Gustavo Chui, Gen. Moisés Sío Wong, Iraida Aguirrechu of Editora Política, the book's editor Mary-Alice Waters, Gen. Armando Choy, and school director Yanet Sánchez Díaz. Bottom: Audience at similar meeting the day before in town of Quemado de Güines, Villa Clara province, in central Cuba.

She pointed to the positive response to the book in the United States, especially among Chinese and other Asian Americans, as seen in a September 9 meeting of nearly 200 sponsored by the Chinese Historical Society of America in San Francisco's Chinatown.

Chinese-Cubans in independence wars

Chui told the youthful audience that all three generals had joined the movement to overthrow the Batista dictatorship as teenagers. They became combatants in the Rebel Army, and later each of them carried out internationalist missions in Angola and elsewhere. Today, he said, they remain active "not as veterans—but as combatants."

He urged students to read *Our History Is Still Being Written*. "The struggle and sacrifice of all those who have fought for Cuba's independence has not been in vain," Chui said. "You are our successors in defending Cuba's sovereignty and our revolution."

Choy told the audience, "It's important to make known the history of the participation of the Chinese in our independence wars." He noted that next June will mark the 160th anniversary of the arrival of the first Spanish ships bringing Chinese indentured laborers to Cuba. "They were virtually slaves," he said. Rebelling against these conditions, thousands of Chinese joined the ranks of pro-independence fighters and became known for their loyalty and bravery.

An estimated 6,000 Chinese fought in the liberation wars but the exact number is unknown, Choy noted. No Chinese names appear on the army rolls because it was common to take on Spanish names.

Choy also spoke in Quemado de Güines and Corralillo in Villa Clara province, the region where he grew up and joined the revolutionary movement. The event in Quemado de Güines drew 230 people, one of the largest turnouts of the seven meetings. He noted that the area was known for the outstanding role of combatants in the underground struggle against Batista and, after the victory of the revolution, in the successful battles in the early 1960s to crush counterrevolutionaries who sowed terror in the Escambray mountains.

One of the revolutionary heroes in that area, Choy explained, was Delfín Sen Cedré, a worker of Chinese ancestry. In early 1961 when Cuba's revolutionary leadership launched a mass literacy campaign, tens of thousands of youth went into the countryside to teach people to read and write. The unions also issued a call to their members, and Sen Cedré was one of many workers who volunteered to work as literacy teachers in some of the most dangerous areas. That year he was murdered by U.S.-backed counterrevolutionaries, who targeted literacy volunteers as part of their campaign of terror in that region.

Cuba, China, and Angola

Sío Wong spoke at five of the meetings in the seven-city tour. At the event in Bayamo, he emphasized that "the publication of this book is important for telling the truth about the Cuban Revolution—not only here but in other countries."

He remarked that he had recently read an article in the *Militant* on the Chinese community in Venezuela, and cited a Chinese-Venezuelan woman who said she knew Cuba is the only Latin American country where there is no discrimination against those of Chinese ancestry.

"The principal measure taken in Cuba against discrimination was the socialist revolution," he said.

In China too, Sío Wong said, the example of the Cuban Revolution needs to be known. He noted that from the mid-1960s, when what was called the Cultural Revolution in China began, to the end of the 1980s when the Soviet-led bloc imploded, relations between Havana and Beijing were very bad.

In the 1970s, he noted, Chinese advisors trained pro-imperialist troops from Zaire that were attacking Angola, while tens of thousands of internationalist Cuban volunteers fought alongside the Angolan army and defeated the invasions by the Zairian forces and the South African apartheid regime, a story that is told in the book. He explained how in 1976 Angolan and Cuban forces captured Zairian soldiers together with some Chinese advisors and Chinese-made weapons.

At that time "China had a great deal of political influence throughout Africa," even in the Angolan army, he said. When one Angolan official welcomed him as a "Chinese comrade," Sío Wong clarified, "I am one of Fidel Castro's Chinese com-

Continued on page 7

How Cuba's working people averted U.S. threat of nuclear war in 1962



Verde Olivo

Fidel Castro visits Cuban gunners during October 1962 "missile" crisis

BY SAM MANUEL

In October 1962 the Democratic administration of U.S. president John F. Kennedy brought the world to the brink of nuclear war in its effort to destroy the socialist revolution in Cuba. The determined response of the Cuban people and their communist leadership thwarted the invasion plan, saving humanity from a nuclear catastrophe.

On the 44th anniversary of those events we reprint below excerpts from remarks by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, on how communists in the United States responded to the so-called Cuban missile crisis. Barnes made the remarks during the discussion period at a Militant Labor Forum in New York City on Nov. 7, 1992.

On Oct. 15, 1962, the White House learned that spy planes had photographed Soviet-supplied missiles in Cuba. The missiles were there as part of a mutual defense pact between Cuba and the USSR in face of stepped-up U.S. preparations to launch another invasion of the island.

Washington ordered a naval blockade of Cuba and placed U.S. armed forces on nuclear alert. On October 22 Kennedy convened a bipartisan congressional leadership meeting where he reported plans to assemble a force of 90,000 U.S. troops to invade Cuba within seven days.

In response Cuban working people mobilized across the island to defend the revolution. In answer to a White House inquiry about Cuba's military readiness, Pentagon planners told Kennedy that U.S. forces would suffer 18,000 casualties in the first 10 days alone in an invasion. Faced with that grim prognosis and the domestic political cost enormous U.S. casualties would entail, the White House sought an alternative course.

On October 28 Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev announced over Radio Moscow that he had ordered the removal of the missiles from Cuba. It was part of a secret deal between Washington and Moscow, in which the Pentagon would remove its missiles in Turkey in exchange.

The Cuban government was not consulted about the deal. Cubans first learned of it over the radio. Havana countered with a list of five demands to settle the crisis. They included ending the U.S. economic blockade, halting U.S. support for counterrevolutionary gangs, and withdrawing U.S. forces from the naval base in Guantánamo Bay.

In a 1992 NBC TV interview Cuban president Fidel Castro explained that Havana had agreed to accept the missiles as an "unavoidable duty" of international solidarity with the USSR, which was threatened by U.S. missiles in Turkey. "If it had been a matter of our own defense, we would not have accepted the emplacement of the missiles here," Castro said in a PBS documentary the same year, "because this would damage the image of the revolution throughout the rest of Latin America, and the presence of the missiles would in fact turn us into a Soviet military base and that had a high political cost."

In a more recent speech, in November 2005, Castro explained why Cuba depends for its revolutionary defense on the armed readiness and political consciousness of Cuban working people, not on chemical, biological, or nuclear weapons. "Even if they were accessible, how much would they cost and what sense would it make producing a nuclear weapon with an enemy that has thousands of nuclear weapons?" Castro said. "We have a different type of nuclear weapon: it's our ideas," he said—Cuba's revolutionary ideas and living example. "We possess a weapon as powerful as nuclear power, and it is the magnitude of the justice for which we are struggling."

The talk by Barnes excerpted below is titled "The Vote for Ross Perot and Patrick Buchanan's 'Culture War': What the 1992 Elections Revealed." The entire presentation is published in *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium.* Copyright © 1999 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



BY JACK BARNES

Last month many of us watched television specials marking the thirtieth anniversary of what is called the "Cuban missile crisis" in the United States. In Cuba it is called the October Crisis, since it was not really about missiles; it was about Washington's unsuccessful effort in October 1962 to destroy the socialist revolution in Cuba. I think there were five network specials on the crisis last month. The three I saw were extremely interesting. It would be useful for communist workers to get the videotapes of a couple and play them for fellow workers; many productive political discussions would result….

But I was struck in watching all of these documentaries by an inaccuracy that gave me a new insight into the importance of the political leverage communists have today through the use of our propaganda arsenal. Each of them portrayed what was happening in the United States at the time as universal mass hysteria. But if you lived through the missile crisis as a political person, as a revolutionist, you know that was not true.

The TV specials showed residents of the United States running into grocery stores to buy canned goods, taking them home, putting them in shelters, and carrying out air raid drills in schools and workplaces. The idea that everybody in the United States in 1962 joined together as "we Americans" and just waited in a patriotic panic for the Kennedys to incinerate the world is utterly inaccurate.

I lived through those days as a young person and as a relatively new member of the Young Socialist Alliance and Socialist Workers Party. I know from my own experience that there were thousands of people in the United States who worked round the clock to stop Washington from invading Cuba. We did not stock up on canned goods. In fact, we did not buy much of anything. We were too busy—we hardly had time to eat. We were organizing people to come down to the picket lines. I remember marching in downtown Chicago across the street from a Woolworth store, for example, where we had picketed earlier in support of civil rights sit-in fighters. Some people who worked at the store came out and supported the picket line.

This single-minded effort was the response of the overwhelming majority of Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance members of all generations. They responded to Washington's heightened war threats against Cuba with the immediacy of a revolutionary fighting instinct. This political course was discussed and decided by the party's Political Committee and the Young Socialist Alliance National Executive Committee and was carried in the news coverage, analysis, and editorial line in the pages of the *Militant*….

Political space inside working class

One of the most difficult things for capitalism's propagandists to understand and portray accurately is how a political vanguard of the working class reaches out to others to use and defend *political space*—as we did during the October missile crisis. Communists have no schemas or timetables. But we do know that the tensions inevitably rising from world capitalism's depression conditions and its inexorable march toward fascism and war keep leading not only to unanticipated crises, but also to resistance out of which vanguard workers can build a movement. Right now, we can anticipate that growing interest among working people and youth in radical ideas ignored by them in the past—or rejected without serious study—will keep ahead of the pace of mass popular struggles.

But these political realities cannot even be seen, much less understood, unless we recognize the space that exists inside the working class and the unions—space that can be used by revolutionary-minded workers to practice politics. This space is not seen or registered by anything in bourgeois public opinion. It can only be seen from inside the working class and the unions. It can best be seen by workers who are communists who are *using* that space to talk politics with other workers, to promote revolutionary literature, to bring co-workers and their unions into fights around social and political issues, and to participate in guerrilla skirmishes around conditions on the job. Without using this political space, the tensions just seem like tensions, the openings are missed, and the space will be diminished over time….

Working-class vanguard

Today there are opportunities to win a new generation of revolutionists to the Socialist Workers Party. Many of them right now will not initially come out of a revitalized labor movement. Through the proletarian party, however, they can be won to join in building a leadership that can organize the working class to make a popular revolution and prevent the fascist devastation and world war that capitalism is dragging humanity toward. Fighters from this generation will reach out to find parties of revolutionists who are workers, revolutionists who have some experience in the class struggle.

Chinese-Cuban generals speak

Continued from page 6

rades, not one of Mao Zedong's."

For 25 years little was published in China about Cuba and vice versa. When relations between the two countries began to improve Sío Wong led the first high-level Cuban delegation to China in 1989. He described for the audience the widespread lack of knowledge about the Cuban Revolution there except for a handful of those of his generation, going back to the early years of the revolution.

That is why it is so important that *Our History Is Still Being Written* is now being translated to Chinese for publication in that country, Sío Wong said.

"There are also hundreds of thousands of Chinese living in the United States and Canada," he added. "Now they will be able to read about this history, too."

Sío Wong pointed to the significance of books published by Pathfinder and of communists who sell and distribute them in the United States. "They are doing work in the belly of the monster, of imperialism. I consider them fighters and *compañeros*."

"The U.S. government talks about the need for a 'transition' in Cuba. Well, here we can see the transition," said Sío Wong at the meeting in Bayamo. He pointed to the audience, which spanned multiple generations including both longtime revolutionary combatants and high school youth. "The transition we are making is toward more socialism," he said to applause.

Following the presentation in Bayamo, several students from the Camilo Cienfuegos military high school were among those who eagerly came over to the display of Pathfinder books. "I didn't know all those things about the history of the Chinese in Cuba," said Julio Miyares Hechavarría, 17.

His classmate Juan Alberto Pérez Espinoza, also 17, commented on Washington's call for a "transition" in Cuba. "Transition?" he asked dismissively. "It's the United States that needs a transition, not us!"

Cuban doctors in Venezuela

Continued from front page

ertador municipality of Caracas in 2003. The Ministry of Health first appealed to Venezuelan doctors who would be willing to live in urban working-class neighborhoods or rural areas and offer their services for free, with a salary of about $600 a month paid by the government. Very few came forward to begin with.

Through an agreement with Havana, large numbers of volunteer Cuban doctors, most of whom had carried out internationalist missions in other countries, began arriving in March 2003. The Cuban doctors receive a monthly stipend of $250 to cover living expenses. Many live in workers' homes in the areas where they serve, operating primary care clinics out of community centers and peoples' houses. Since 2004 the government has also built nearly 2,000 *modulos,* small neighborhood clinics with a doctor's office on the first floor and a couple of rooms above where medical personnel can rest. These doctors staff the clinics in the morning and in the afternoons they visit people at home, from building to building, getting to know their families, medical records, and living conditions, and practicing preventive medicine.

Unlike many Venezuelan doctors, "they treat us like human beings," said Jesús Arena, a security guard at the Borgoña construction site. This remark about the Cuban doctors has become commonplace as they have reached every corner of the country and their reputation has spread, cutting across anti-communist prejudices that were prevalent four years ago. (See also "Cuban doctors in Venezuela operate free neighborhood clinics" in Nov. 3, 2003, *Militant,* and "Clinics operated by Cuban doctors expand in Venezuela" in July 18, 2005, issue.)

The number of these primary care clinics reached a high of 15,000 in Venezuela last year, said Joel Pantoja Jr., 27, a Venezuelan doctor here who pioneered the entry of Venezuelan doctors into Barrio Adentro. "The number of the primary care clinics has now declined to about 9,000," Pantoja added. The reason, he said, is that more Cuban doctors are being shifted to larger clinics, called Integrated Diagnostic Centers (CDI), and there are not enough Venezuelan doctors who have been qualified yet to fill the gap.

Under Barrio Adentro 2, which started in early 2005, larger popular clinics are being built that are open around the clock. The CDIs offer quality emergency care, including minor surgery, free of charge. Modern equipment in well-built and air-conditioned facilities allows advanced diagnosis and care. Ambulances are included. The government is also building Integrated Rehabilitation Centers and advanced technology labs.

The third phase of Barrio Adentro, which was launched this year, includes repairing and re-equipping the country's 299 public hospitals and building new ones that would offer care like the clinics operated by Cuban doctors.

Speaking October 5 at the inauguration of a hospital in Barcelona, Anzoátegui state, Venezuelan president Hugo Chávez said the government has built 216 larger clinics and 6 high-tech labs across the country in the last year and a half.

The pace is much slower than what had been anticipated. The government had projected building 1,200 CDIs and rehabilitation centers by the end of 2005.



Militant/Argiris Malapanis

Florida Integrated Diagnostic Center in Valencia, Venezuela, October 6. From left: Joel Pantoja Sr., Mabel Martínez, Nelly Gaerste, and *Militant* reporter Róger Calero. Martínez is a Cuban doctor who works at the clinic. Pantoja and Gaerste are Venezuelan doctors who are part of Barrio Adentro. On right is a clinic security guard.

"There is opposition to Barrio Adentro in the health-care establishment because most Venezuelan doctors practice medicine to make a profit," said Gaerste.

In June 2003 the Venezuelan Medical Federation (FMV) filed suit asking the courts to bar Cuban doctors from practicing. A lower court decision to grant the request was overturned by higher courts. In July 2005 hundreds of FMV members protested in downtown Caracas claiming Cuban volunteers are taking the jobs of Venezuelan doctors. A handful of incidents of physical attacks on Cuban doctors took place when the program started. But these have subsided. As Jesús Arena put it, expressing a popular sentiment, "If they touch the Cuban doctors we'll go after them because the Cubans save our lives. We take care of their security."

Mabel Martínez is a Cuban doctor working at the Florida CDI in Valencia. She told the *Militant* October 6 that two months ago, after treating a man who had been hit above his left eye with a rock, she referred him to a nearby hospital with an X-ray showing he had a fracture that required surgery. "The Venezuelan doctor on duty threw the X-ray in the garbage and sent the man home when he saw the referral was from a Cuban doctor," she said. "The man almost lost his eye."

Martínez said such incidents have become less frequent. Last month, she said, some Venezuelan doctors from a nearby public hospital asked for a meeting with Cuban doctors at the Florida clinic to discuss how to collaborate better.

All the nurses, janitors, and other personnel at these clinics, besides the doctors, are Venezuelan. Gaerste, one of a few Venezuelan doctors who works at the Canaima CDI, introduced *Militant* reporters to three of the janitors there, María Hisea, Paula Piñedo, and Carmen Salazar, who said the attitudes of the Cuban doctors of selfless human solidarity and putting the interests of the patients first are prevalent among the Venezuelan personnel too. "We don't just clean the floors," Salazar said. "When there is an emergency and someone comes in bloody late at night we help the people from the ambulance bring them in. We like it here. Barrio Adentro is how the whole society should be."

Mexico's police attack protesters in Oaxaca

Continued from front page

of the teachers union and APPO is that Gov. Ulises Ruiz resign. The protesters accuse Ruiz of rigging the last elections and of repression and corruption. Ruiz is a member of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), which dominated Mexican politics for decades. Thousands of protesters have been occupying the central square, as well as radio stations and government buildings, in a standoff with the state government.

The federal government headed by President Vicente Fox, of the National Action Party (PAN), massed forces outside the city of Oaxaca in mid-October, but held off on taking military action. On October 27 pro-Ruiz thugs attacked the protesters, killing three people, including U.S. journalist Bradley Roland Will. Two days later Fox ordered the federal police to move in, supposedly to "restore order" after those deaths. Authorities have since announced the arrest of five men in the killing of Will. They include the police chief and two cops from the nearby town of Santa Lucia del Camino.

The teachers and APPO members left their encampment, but continue to protest. On October 30 thousands took part in three peaceful marches that converged on the city center. "All we want is work, hospitals, better schools, and the military out," said Veralisa Flores, a teacher, according to the *Los Angeles Times*, explaining why she and her friends were marching.

Just before the police assault, the teachers had announced an agreement to return to work, under terms that included a 30 percent raise over six years. As of today, union officials report about 60 percent of schools have reopened.

About 2,000 supporters of the Ruiz government also marched to central Oaxaca today in support of the federal police. The Los Angeles Spanish-language daily *La Opinión* said most of these demonstrators were middle- and upper-class.

Meanwhile, both houses of the Mexican Congress voted to ask Ruiz to either resign or take a leave of absence.

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EDITORIAL

Solidarity with Goodyear strikers!

Solidarity with the 15,000 workers on strike against Goodyear across the United States and Canada! That should be the battle cry of the labor movement and all working people. Help get out the word on what's at stake in the largest strike in North America today. Urge union brothers and sisters, co-workers, friends, and relatives to send solidarity messages and material aid, visit the picket lines, and join rallies in solidarity with the strikers. Invite striking Steelworkers to speak at meetings of union locals and other groups.

The tire bosses' demands to cut wages, jobs, and retiree benefits, are part of the broader drive by the ruling capitalists to shore up declining profits and beat competitors abroad at the expense of working people. The recent successes by the U.S. auto and airline bosses in getting the acquiescence of the union officialdom to gut wages, pensions, health care, and job safety, have only emboldened Goodyear and other employers in their profit offensive.

Working people know well what this concessionary drive means for job conditions and our very lives. This week another coal miner was killed on the job in West Virginia, bringing the nationwide total for the year to 43, the highest number in over a decade. The death toll in the coal mines—to say nothing of fatality and injury rates at construction sites and other industries—is a brutal reminder of what the bosses think of us, and what will happen to our class if their profit-drive is left unchecked.

Goodyear, the top U.S. tire-maker, is trying to go as far as it can toward breaking the union. It is aggressively recruiting scabs. It has announced plans to close its plant in Tyler, Texas, arrogantly writing off one of the main demands of the strikers. If Goodyear succeeds in its anti-union assault, it will put more blood in the mouths of other companies, like Bridgestone/Firestone, waiting to see how far they can go on similar assaults they are planning.

The Goodyear strikers are using union power to stand up to the bosses' offensive. Organizing to bring our collective strength to bear is the only weapon working people have to fight back.

Support the Goodyear workers' cause! A victory by the striking Steelworkers will be a victory for the entire working class and its allies.

LETTERS

Support the Cuban Five

As someone living under house arrest I appreciate your support of the Cuban 5 political prisoners. Our oppressors can jail us but they cannot subjugate us. Our integrity forbids it.

Gary Striker
Montpelier, Vermont

Fascism and big business

Thank you for the informative article about the nature of fascism ("Fascism: A way to maintain capitalist rule" in October 9 issue). I understand you are discussing how employers as a class would use fascism to hold on to power, but I had an experience with an individual boss at my first job at a machine shop in Washington State.

The owner talked a good line about how "the little guy gets messed over" and how he supports "the working man." The truth was far different.

When somebody came in to be interviewed for a job, the boss would go to his office where the interview took place and uncover a collection of old LP records. At the very front of the records he would place an album of World War II German marching music. The album had pictures of fascist leaders and swastikas. When somebody asked, he would say, "It helps to screen out weirdos and troublemakers." If someone complained he would not hire them. The shop was made up of all white workers.

This idiot may not have been in any fascist group. But using such symbols to get control defines a fascist.

E.G. Monroe
Piscataway, New Jersey

Immigration prisoners abused

Ruth Mory, the wife of Moisés [Mory], a Peruvian undocumented immigrant being detained since May 2004, sent an e-mail dated Oct. 19, asking for help. In her e-mail, she states that 21 undocumented immigrants are or have been made to stand naked for hours at the Seneca County Jail in Tiffin. The detainees are going through this abuse in the Seneca County Jail gym to try and force them to sign voluntary deportation documents so they can be deported as soon as possible. Bibles and other reading and writing materials have been denied to them including deodorant, according to Mory from West New York, New Jersey.

When contacted last Wednesday, Seneca County Sheriff Thomas Steyer denied the allegations, but says that they use the gym on occasion to house detainees (undocumented immigrants). At the moment, he says that there are at least 63 undocumented immigrants from at least 20 countries.

When asked if Moisés Mory-Lamas was in the county jail, he refused to give out any information about him and referred *El Conquistador* newspaper to Greg Palmore from U.S. ICE in Detroit.

The Department of Homeland Security in the Ohio region has received our e-mail of inquiry into the allegations and are looking into it. WTOL TV is now requesting to interview Mory's husband, according to a WTOL-TV Channel 11 representative in Toledo.

H. Nelson Goodson
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

The above appeared October 27 in El Conquistador*, a weekly bilingual newspaper in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, along with a reprint of the article "Imprisoned for a year without a hearing, unionist fights deportation," from the March 14, 2005,* Militant.

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

Corrections

An error was introduced in the editing of the article "UCLA students rally for affirmative action" in last week's issue. The article should have said that students of underrepresented nationalities—Black, Chicano, Latino, and Native American—make up 14.3 percent of this year's freshman class at UCLA, not at the 10 University of California campuses.

The following paragraph should have also been included in the same article: "Asian Americans make up 38 percent of the UCLA student body and have recently come under attack in the student newspaper, the *Daily Bruin*. MEChA, the African Students Union, the Asian Pacific coalition, and the Pacific Islanders Student Association issued a joint response pointing out that the term Asian American encompasses many nationalities, a number of which are underrepresented at UCLA. They pointed as evidence to a total of 50 Pacific Island students and a total of 18 Hmong students among UCLA's 34,000 students."

The headline of the article on the teachers' strike in Oaxaca, Mexico, in the October 30 issue mistakenly said, "Tentative accord ends five-month teachers' strike in Mexico." It should have said, "Five-month teachers' strike in Mexico expands."

Socialist Workers campaign

Continued from front page

against what most working people face: a brutal offensive by the bosses who, driven by their profit greed, are going after workers' wages, health, and safety. That's why the socialist campaign supports all struggles by workers to organize unions and mobilize union power to defeat the bosses' attacks."

"I need the *Militant* to follow what's going on with the Goodyear strike," said one of the workers, according to Forrestal. "The socialist election campaign and the *Militant* are getting a good response from these workers," Forrestal said. "In the past three weeks, since the Goodyear strike began, about 20 Firestone workers have bought the *Militant* and five have subscribed, four at the plant gate and one during campaigning door-to-door in town."

Many of the 1,400 workers at the Des Moines Bridgestone/Firestone plant, who are members of United Steelworkers Local 310, "are following the Goodyear strike closely," Forrestal said. "Their own contract expired July 22. One worker who subscribed to the *Militant* said the word circulating inside the plant is that there will be no contract until the Goodyear strike is settled." Firestone employs 6,000 at eight U.S. plants. Workers report the company is seeking cuts in wages, medical benefits, and pensions, and is planning to shut down a plant in Oklahoma City, Forrestal said.

"Many workers are also receptive to our explanation that imperialist wars abroad are an extension of the assaults by the employers and the government on the living and job conditions of workers and farmers at home," Newberry said.

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"We are for the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of U.S. and all 'coalition' troops from Iraq and Afghanistan…. End Washington's cold war against Cuba! Hands off Venezuela!" says the statement by Nelson Gonzalez, SWP candidate for governor of Minnesota, printed in the November/December issue of *Insight,* the magazine of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 789 in Minnesota. *Insight* published biographies, along with photos and excerpts of the campaign platforms of Gonzalez and socialist senatorial candidate Rebecca Williamson, both members of the local. Gonzalez, a meatpacker, supported striking mechanics at Northwest Airlines, the candidate's biography says.

"Williamson, 25, is a write-in candidate for U.S. Senate and a trimmer at Dakota Premium Foods in South St. Paul," reads the biography of the other socialist candidate. "She actively supports the fight for legalization of all undocumented immigrants now and opposes government immigration raids and other attacks."

"Millions declared in mass rallies and strikes this year, 'We are workers, not criminals!' " reads Williamson's statement printed in *Insight.* "These actions, involving up to 2 million in the streets nationwide, have shown that the unprecedented immigration of the last decades and the integration of these workers into the hereditary proletariat of the United States have strengthened the working class palpably and irreversibly."



The socialist campaign is also getting attention abroad. Below are excerpts from an interview with Martín Koppel, SWP candidate for Attorney General in New York, which appeared in the October 20 online edition of *Invasor*, a newspaper in Ciego de Ávila, Cuba, under the headline, "In the United States we have to make a social revolution." Sayli Sosa Barceló and Luis Raúl Vázquez did the interview.

—In the U.S. political context, what does the Socialist Workers Party represent?

—"We primarily work in industries such as coal, garment, and meatpacking, which are where the offensive of the bosses has been most intense and brutal…. Many people work more than two jobs in order to survive. That is where we work, organizing unions, strikes, and other types of protests.

"We put forward as an alternative that working people take power, as the only way to end exploitation. Those ideas now get more of a response owing to the economic conditions that exist.

"We are running a ticket in the New York election and throughout the country. We are running against the Democrats, Republicans, and all other capitalist parties….

"Our campaign begins with the world, not with the United States or New York.

"In the international sphere, we oppose the threats against Korea. Right now the U.S. government is trying to impose very severe economic sanctions, including the right to piracy, that is, to board Korean ships, search and confiscate them.

"We defend Iran against the threats by the U.S. government. Along those lines, we support the right of all semicolonial countries to develop the energy sources they need, including nuclear energy, to be able to increase access to electricity, which is a prerequisite for social and economic advances. Iran needs nuclear energy to be able to close the gap between rich and poor.

"We call for the nationalization of the energy monopolies, even more when oil prices are so high, and every so often there are blackouts in our country. In New York, for example, a community in Queens was left without electricity for over a week with no valid explanation.

"We support the need to socialize the system of health care, to extend it as a universal right. In addition, we call for abolishing the death penalty and police brutality in our streets."